

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3901
ANSWERED ON 11/08/2026

IMPORT OF ARECA NUT

3901. SHRI KOTA SRINIVASA POOJARY

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY** (वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री) be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that large quantities of low-quality areca nut are being imported into India from Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh by misclassifying them under alternative HSN codes like "roasted nuts" to bypass Minimum Import Price (MIP) and high customs duty, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that this has led to severe price suppression for areca nut growers in coastal and Malnad regions of Karnataka and is damaging the reputation of Indian varieties like Chali and Rashi, if so, the details thereof,
- (c) whether the Government proposes to strictly re-classify all areca nut imports under a single HSN code and audit misuse of alternative codes by CBIC, if so, the details thereof,
- (d) whether the Government proposes to enhance customs and FSSAI enforcement at all ports and land borders for quality checks, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to review loopholes in FTAs and revise the MIP for areca nut to protect domestic farmers, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय में राज्यमंत्री (श्री जितिन प्रसाद)
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (e) The Government, in April 2025, revised the import policy of Roasted Areca Nuts from 'Free' to 'Prohibited', except where the Cost Insurance and Freight (CIF) based import value is ₹351 per kilogram or above, thereby bringing the import conditions for Roasted Areca Nuts in line with those applicable to Areca Nuts and preventing circumvention of the Minimum Import Price (MIP). With the alignment of the import policy conditions for Areca Nuts and Roasted Areca Nuts, concerns relating to imports under alternative tariff classifications have been addressed, thereby ensuring a uniform policy framework for both products.

The Government remains vigilant regarding instances of possible misdeclaration or misclassification of imported goods. Any such cases are dealt with by the Customs authorities in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962, and other applicable laws.

Domestic prices of areca nut are influenced by several factors, including domestic production, demand-supply dynamics, quality, seasonal arrivals and market conditions. The Government continuously monitors the domestic market situation and remains engaged with stakeholders.

All imported food consignments, including areca nuts intended for human consumption, are required to comply with the applicable provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the regulations made thereunder. Such consignments are subject to regulatory checks by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), wherever applicable, in addition to examination by the Customs authorities under the prescribed risk management framework through inter-agency coordination, intelligence-based interventions, and appropriate action against violations detected at ports and land customs stations.

The Government reviews its import policy, including policy conditions applicable to areca nuts, and its commitments under Free Trade Agreements from time to time, consistent with its international obligations and keeping in view the interests of domestic producers, consumers and other stakeholders.
